

REMARKS

This paper is being filed in response to the final Office Action mailed November 12, 2003. Claims 1-7 were amended in a previously filed amendment and are pending.

The Examiner has rejected applicant's claims 1-7 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by the published Aoyagi et al. U.S. Patent Application (Pub. No. 2001/0012112). According to the Examiner, applicant's previously filed amendment necessitated the new grounds of rejection. The Examiner's rejection is respectfully traversed.

Applicant's independent claims 1 and 5 each recite a data processing apparatus for effecting a predetermined process with respect to another data processing apparatus. Claim 1 further recites a decision unit for deciding which data processing apparatus is to effect a charge process and a control unit for controlling the data processing apparatus decided by the decision unit to effect the charge process for both data processing apparatuses. Claim 5 further recites an information portion for informing the other data processing apparatus of information whether the data processing apparatus effects a charge process or not, so that the other data processing apparatus decides which data processing apparatus is to effect the charge process, and one of the data processing apparatuses effects the charge process for both data processing apparatuses. Applicant's independent claims 6 and 7 each recite a method for controlling a data processing apparatus according to claims 1 and 5, respectively.

The above constructions of independent claims 1, 5, 6 and 7 prevent performing duplicate charge process operations, i.e., process operations for determining a charge or cost, in a plurality of devices, as described in applicant's specification, for example, at page 11, line 15-page 12, line 11 and as shown in Figures 3 and 4. Such constructions are not taught or suggested by the cited art of record.

With respect to the Examiner's rejections of independent claims 1 and 5 and independent claims 6 and 7, the Examiner has argued as follows:

"Aoyagi discloses a data processing apparatus for effecting a predetermined process with respect to another data processing apparatus, comprising a decision unit for deciding which of said data processing apparatus is to effect a charge process (page 2, section 0019-0027); and a control unit for controlling one of said data processing apparatuses decided by said decision unit to effect the charge process for both of said data processing apparatuses (page 4, section 0047-0050)."

The Examiner has made similar conclusions and cited the same section (page 2, sections 0019-0027) of the reference with respect to claims 5-7.

From these passages, it is apparent that the Aoyagi et al. reference teaches a system and method whereby a copying machine 101 is connected to a computer 100 via a memory board 102 to send image data read by the copying machine 101 to the computer. The computer 100 edits and sends the edited image back to the copying machine 101 to print out. According to Aoyagi et al., the connection of the copier to the computer without a printer controller or other communication line enables the transfer of image data at a high speed.

However, the Aoyagi et al. reference is not at all concerned with making determinations as to charges or costs related to the use of the devices in the reference, let alone does it deal with the problem of a duplicated charge process being performed by a plurality of devices (i.e., printer, copier, and scanner). Thus, there is no mention in the Aoyagi et al. reference as to effecting a charge process or controlling a data processing apparatus to effect a charge process. There is also no mention in Aoyagi et al. reference of one data processing apparatus effecting a charge process for both data processing apparatuses.

Accordingly applicant's claims 1 and 6, and their respective dependent claims, which recite deciding which data processing apparatus is to effect a charge process and controlling the decided data processing apparatus to effect the charge process for both data processing apparatuses, patentably distinguish over the Aoyagi et al. reference. Likewise, claims 5 and 7, and their respective dependent claims, which recite informing a data processing apparatus of whether a data processing apparatus is to effect a charge process or not and deciding which data processing apparatus is to effect the charge process, so that one data processing apparatus effects the charge process for both data processing apparatuses, patentably distinguish over the Aoyagi et al. reference.

In view of the above, it is submitted that applicant's claims are patentable.

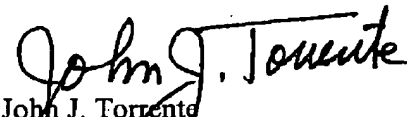
Reconsideration of the claims is respectfully requested.

If the Examiner believes that an interview would expedite consideration of this response or of the application, a request is made that the Examiner telephone applicant's counsel at (212) 682-9640.

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Respectfully submitted,

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